

Economic Development & Improvement Commission
Regular Meeting – Thursday March 11, 2010 – 12:00 Noon
Town Manager's Conference Room, First Floor, Town Hall

MINUTES

1. Call To Order – Chair Greenblatt called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

2. Attendance and Quorum (6 members required)

Members in attendance: Chair Howard Greenblatt, John Adamian, Rene Ortega, Bill Knapp, Joan Hughes, Dorcas McHugh, Betty Standish, Chris Lyons and Jay Amoruso.

Members absent: Brian Silver, Rick Willard, Jonah Evenson, Betty Rosania, Doug Sacks and Ken Rizzio.

Also in attendance: Jeff Bridges – Town Manager; Phil Knecht – Planning and Zoning Commission Liaison; Peter Gillespie – Economic Development Manager/Town Planner and Denise Bradley – Assistant Planner.

3. Old Business

a. Farmer's Market – No report was given.

b. Business Visitation Program – Peter Gillespie noted that John Adamian had visited Fresh Pickings, the new produce and deli at 1267-1309 Silas Deane Highway. Mr. Gillespie asked the EDIC members to please get out and start pushing this effort forward.

c. Wethersfield Shops Local – Chair Greenblatt noted the success of the Committee's opening meeting. He discussed the meeting's agenda items and reported a high turnout and level of interest. Bill Knapp noted that most of the participants were enthusiastic and raised several valid questions that need to be addressed. Joan Hughes described some of the short term strategies discussed and noted that the long term goal is to have the businesses take the lead in the program. Betty Standish noted the recent article in *Wethersfield Life* and discussed pricing info regarding the purchase of vinyl decals. Chris Lyons made a motion to spend up to \$300 on decals. Bill Knapp seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

d. Façade Improvement Applications – Peter Gillespie reported on the 2 pending applications for Hair Innovators and the former Ritz Camera property. He noted that he is waiting for itemized information and that there are several additional interested program participants. Mr. Gillespie also reported that there was a closing for the Pelton's loan and that he has requested an additional \$25,000 in funding through the CIP Budget.

4. New Business

a. Vacant Property Updates – Peter Gillespie reported that there have been several interested parties who have done walk-thru's of the Fun Zone and that he has provided copies of site and floor plans. Mr.

Gillespie noted that the Redevelopment Agency has been having conversations with the owners of 1000 Silas Deane Highway about partnering with the town on a redevelopment plan. He then stated that there has been no activity to report regarding the Northeast Utilities and Porter & Chester properties.

b. Budget - Peter Gillespie reported that the budget has been submitted and he briefly detailed the request.

c. Future Breakfast Meeting Topics and Dates – Commercial Realtors – Chair Greenblatt noted that the breakfast can serve as a good opportunity to ask questions about what commercial developers are looking for in a community. He also noted that the realtor meeting was well attended and that useful feedback was received. Peter Gillespie discussed looking into scheduling the meeting for mid- to late April.

5. Reports -

Town Manager's Report – Jeff Bridges reported on the following:

- Community Consensus Building – Alta Lash
- Wilkus Farm remediation – IWWA & PZC remediation applications

Town Council Liaison's Report – No report was given.

Planning & Zoning Commission Liaison's Report – Phil Knecht reported on the highlights of the March 2, 2010 PZC meeting.

Tourism Commission Liaison's Report – Dorcas McHugh reported on the highlights of the February 10, 2010 Tourism meeting.

Redevelopment Agency Liaison Report – John Adamian noted that he will be unable to continue as a regular liaison but agreed to attend when he is available. Peter Gillespie stated that he would send an email around to the EDIC asking for alternates.

Chamber of Commerce Liaison's Report – Ellyn Laramie submitted an electronic report on the following:

- Speed Leads
- Warm Welcome to Wethersfield
- Banner's
- Silas Deane Taskforce Meeting with Sen. Fonfara

Director of Planning and Economic Development's Report – Peter Gillespie discussed the highlights of the Monthly Economic Development Report.

6. Chairman's Report – Chair Greenblatt reported on his meeting with Alta Lash regarding the Community Consensus Building.

7. Sub-Committee Reports -

Marketing and Communications – Updates were provided on the following:

- Shop Local
- Commercial Realtors Breakfast

Financial Strategies – Peter Gillespie noted that the representatives of the application for the multi-family development project proposed at 2180 Berlin Turnpike may make an informational presentation at the EDIC at the next meeting.

8. Minutes- February 11, 2010 Meeting – John Adamian made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Dorcas McHugh seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

9. Next Meeting – April 8, 2010

10. Correspondence - There was no correspondence.

11. Adjournment – John Adamian made a motion to adjourn at 12:59 p.m. Chris Lyons seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner